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28 May 2024

National & International News

<p>AI Anchors</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DD Kisan is all set to achieve a significant milestone by relaunching with a fresh look and style on May 26, 2024, after a successful nine-year run. • The channel aims to enhance engagement and better serve India's farming community. <p>Key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This relaunch introduces AI anchors, Krish and Bhoomi, making DD Kisan the country's first government TV channel to adopt AI technology. • Krish and Bhoomi are not mere computer programs; they are sophisticated entities designed to mimic human behavior, capable of delivering news round the clock, 365 days a year, without fatigue. • These AI anchors will provide crucial information on agricultural research, farm market trends, weather updates, and government schemes. • They are unique in their ability to communicate fluently in fifty languages, ensuring farmers across India can benefit. <p>About:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established on May 26, 2015, DD Kisan is India's sole television channel dedicated to serving the agricultural community. • It aims to provide farmers with timely information on weather, markets, and other factors to help them make informed decisions. • The channel also highlights the efforts of innovative farmers, promoting agricultural and rural development through education. • DD Kisan focuses on sustainable farming, animal husbandry, and plantation, enhancing the public's understanding of agriculture.
<p>International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea</p>	<p>Context:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) recently delivered an advisory opinion on climate change, clarifying countries' obligations to combat marine pollution and safeguard the marine environment amid climate impacts.



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Key points:

- **Background:**
 - ITLOS is an independent **judicial body** established by the **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)** to resolve disputes related to the interpretation and application of the Convention.
 - It is based in **Hamburg, Germany**.
- **Advisory Opinion:**
 - ITLOS responded to a request from the **Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (COSIS)** regarding the obligations of State parties to the UNCLOS in combating marine pollution and protecting the marine environment from the impacts of climate change.
- **Definition of Marine Pollution:**
 - The tribunal expanded the **definition of marine pollution under the UNCLOS to include greenhouse gases (GHGs)**, stating that anthropogenic GHG emissions into the atmosphere constitute pollution of the marine environment.
- **Obligations of State Parties:**
 - States are required to take "all necessary measures" to prevent, reduce, and control marine pollution from anthropogenic GHG emissions.
 - These measures should be guided by the best available science and may include actions outlined in climate change treaties like the Paris Agreement.
- **Relationship with the Paris Agreement:**
 - While the Paris Agreement addresses climate change and UNCLOS governs oceans and seas, the Paris Agreement does not supersede the obligations under UNCLOS to combat marine pollution from GHG emissions.
 - Instead, it complements these obligations.



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- **Assistance to Developing Countries:**
 - States with greater capabilities should assist developing and least developed countries in combating marine pollution from GHG emissions through capacity building, scientific expertise, and technology transfer.

Stellaria mcclintockiae



Context:

- Researchers have recently identified a novel plant species in the **Nelliampathy hills, belonging to the Stellaria (Caryophyllaceae species) group.**
- This newly discovered species has been named **Stellaria mcclintockiae, in tribute to the eminent geneticist Barbara McClintock.**

Key points:

- Described in the journal **Phytotaxa**, the newly found species is classified as part of the *S. media* group but exhibits notable differences in bracts, sepals, petals, pollen morphology, and seed surface architecture when compared to other species.
- **Molecular analyses (ITS)** have confirmed the new taxon's validity, distinguishing it from its close relatives.

SIDS-4

Context:

- The **Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS-4)** is scheduled to be held from May 27-30, 2024.

Key points:

- The conference, themed "**Charting the course toward resilient prosperity,**" aims to evaluate SIDS' progress toward sustainable development, **including the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.**
- It intends to produce a politically agreed, focused, forward-looking, and action-oriented outcome document.
- **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** has provided \$1.9 billion in grant finance to SIDS through national, global, and regional projects.
- This finance has also leveraged several times that amount in additional resources for sustainable development.



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- The current GEF-8 funding cycle (2022 – 2026) continues to strongly support SIDS and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), emphasizing their needs.

Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

- Small Island Developing States (SIDS) comprise 37 UN member nations and 20 associate members of regional commissions, uniquely and unfortunately positioned at the forefront of multiple global crises, notably climate change.
- These remote economies, prone to natural disasters were formally recognized as a special case both for their environment and development at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- Occupying less than 0.5 percent of the world's surface, these nations are spread across three key regions: the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea (AIS).
- In the face of escalating global crises, including climate change and COVID-19, SIDS find themselves on the frontline, constantly navigating through a cycle of environmental disasters and recovery efforts, which tests their resilience and ability to sustain their communities and economies.

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